AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.-6. Canceled.

7. (Currently Amended) An isolated [[microorganism]] *Escherichia coli* comprising an NADH-dependent D-lactate dehydrogenase (ldhA) gene obtained from *Escherichia coli* wherein said [[microorganism's]] *Escherichia coli's* FAD-dependent D-lactate dehydrogenase (dld) inherent activity is inactivated or decreased, wherein said [[microorganism's]] *Escherichia coli's* pyruvate formate-lyase (pfl) inherent activity is inactivated or decreased, and wherein said [[microorganism's]] NADH-dependent D-lactate deyhdrogenase activity is enhanced.

8.-14. Canceled.

15. (Currently Amended) The isolated [[microorganism]] *Escherichia coli* according to claim 7, wherein said ldhA gene expresses the ldhA on the genome of the [[microorganism]] *Escherichia coli* by using a promoter of a gene which controls expression of a protein involved in a glycolytic pathway, a nucleic acid biosynthesis pathway, or an amino acid biosynthesis pathway.

16.-17. Canceled.

18. (Currently Amended) The isolated [[microorganism]] *Escherichia coli* of claim 15, ~~wherein said microorganism is *Escherichia coli* and~~ wherein said ldhA is expressed using a promoter of a gene obtained from *Escherichia coli* which controls expression of a protein involved in a glycolytic pathway, a nucleic acid biosynthesis pathway, or an amino acid biosynthesis pathway, instead of using a promoter of a gene encoding the ldhA obtained from *Escherichia coli*.

19. (Previously Presented) The isolated *Escherichia coli* according to claim 18, wherein said promoter that controls expression of the protein involved in the glycolytic pathway, the nucleic acid biosynthesis pathway, or the amino acid biosynthesis pathway is a promoter of a glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase gene obtained from *Escherichia coli*.

20-40. Canceled.

41. (Currently Amended) The isolated [[microorganism]] *Escherichia coli* according to claim 7, wherein said [[microorganism's]] *Escherichia coli's* malate dehydrogenase (mdh) inherent activity is inactivated or decreased and/or said [[microorganism's]] *Escherichia coli's* aspartate ammonia-lyase (aspA) inherent activity is inactivated or decreased.

42.-45. Canceled.

46. (Withdrawn) A method for producing D-lactic acid, which comprises culturing the microorganism according to claim 7 in a liquid medium, wherein D-lactic acid is produced, accumulated, and isolated from the liquid medium.

47. (Withdrawn) A method for producing D-lactic acid, which comprises culturing the microorganism according to claim 41 in a liquid medium, wherein D-lactic acid is produced, accumulated, and isolated from the liquid medium.

48. (Withdrawn) A method for producing D-lactic acid, which comprises culturing the microorganism according to claim 42 in a liquid medium, wherein D-lactic acid is produced, accumulated, and isolated from the liquid medium.

49. (Withdrawn) A method for producing D-lactic acid, which comprises culturing the microorganism according to claim 43 in a liquid medium, wherein D-lactic acid is produced, accumulated, and isolated from the liquid medium.

50. (Withdrawn) A method for producing D-lactic acid, which comprises culturing the microorganism according to claim 44 in a liquid medium, wherein D-lactic acid is produced, accumulated, and isolated from the liquid medium.

51. (Withdrawn) A method for producing D-lactic acid, which comprises culturing the microorganism according to claim 45 in a liquid medium, wherein D-lactic acid is produced, accumulated, and isolated from the liquid medium.

52. (Withdrawn) The method for producing D-lactic acid according to claim 46, wherein culture is carried out on a medium to which two or more kinds of amino acids are added.

53. (Withdrawn) The method for producing D-lactic acid according to claim 47, wherein culture is carried out on a medium to which two or more kinds of amino acids are added.

54. (Withdrawn) The method for producing D-lactic acid according to claim 48, wherein culture is carried out on a medium to which two or more kinds of amino acids are added.

55. (Withdrawn) The method for producing D-lactic acid according to claim 49, wherein culture is carried out on a medium to which two or more kinds of amino acids are added.

56. (Withdrawn) The method for producing D-lactic acid according to claim 50, wherein culture is carried out on a medium to which two or more kinds of amino acids are added.

57. (Withdrawn) The method for producing D-lactic acid according to claim 51, wherein culture is carried out on a medium to which two or more kinds of amino acids are added.

58. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 46, wherein culture is carried out under aerobic conditions.

59. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 47, wherein culture is carried out under aerobic conditions.

60. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 48, wherein culture is carried out under aerobic conditions.

61. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 49, wherein culture is carried out under aerobic conditions.

62. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 50, wherein culture is carried out under aerobic conditions.

63. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 51, wherein culture is carried out under aerobic conditions.

64. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 58, wherein the aerobic conditions enable supply of oxygen which satisfies a requirement of an oxygen-transfer coefficient K_La of not less than 1 h^{-1} and not more than 400 h^{-1} at normal pressure using water at a temperature of 30°C.

65. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 59, wherein the aerobic conditions enable supply of oxygen which satisfies a requirement of an oxygen-transfer coefficient K_La of not less than 1 h^{-1} and not more than 400 h^{-1} at normal pressure using water at a temperature of 30°C.

66. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 60, wherein the aerobic conditions enable supply of oxygen which satisfies a requirement of an oxygen-transfer coefficient K_La of not less than 1 h^{-1} and not more than 400 h^{-1} at normal pressure using water at a temperature of 30°C.

67. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 61, wherein the aerobic conditions enable supply of oxygen which satisfies a requirement of an oxygen-transfer coefficient K_La of not less than 1 h^{-1} and not more than 400 h^{-1} at normal pressure using water at a temperature of 30°C.

68. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 62, wherein the aerobic conditions enable supply of oxygen which satisfies a requirement of an oxygen-transfer coefficient K_La of not less than 1 h^{-1} and not more than 400 h^{-1} at normal pressure using water at a temperature of 30°C.

69. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 63, wherein the aerobic conditions enable supply of oxygen which satisfies a requirement of an oxygen-transfer coefficient K_La of not less than 1 h^{-1} and not more than 400 h^{-1} at normal pressure using water at a temperature of 30°C.

70. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 46, wherein the culture pH is 6 to 8.

71. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 47, wherein the culture pH is 6 to 8.

72. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 48, wherein the culture pH is 6 to 8.

73. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 49, wherein the culture pH is 6 to 8.

74. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 50, wherein the culture pH is 6 to 8.

75. (Withdrawn) The method for producing lactic acid according to claim 51, wherein the culture pH is 6 to 8.